Praying the Word

# Praying the Word

June 2003

The Lutheran World Federation

Department for Theology and Studies
Office for Worship and Congregational Life

Further copies can be ordered from The Lutheran World Federation, Office for Finance and Administration, P.O. Box 2100, CH-1211 Geneva 2, Switzerland, or send us an e-mail via our Web site at **www.lutheranworld.org** where the entire essay is available for online reading or downloading.

Artwork:

Published by

© Barbara Robra

150, rte de Ferney

The Lutheran World Federation

Design:

P.O. Box 2100

Stéphane Gallay

CH-1211 Geneva 2

Switzerland

Editorial assistance:

Iris J. Benesch

© 2003, The Lutheran World Federation

Printed in Switzerland by SRO-Kundig

ISBN 3-905676-05-2

# **Preface**

#### Päivi Jussila

As the coordinator of the Lutheran World Federation's study program on "Spiritual Life in Community" since 2000, I would like to take this opportunity to thank all those persons and communities that contributed to this study. A team consisting of nine members visited the following local congregations and communities in Germany, Brazil, USA, India and Tanzania in 2001–2002:

#### Germany

#### The Evangelical Lutheran Church in Bavaria

Communität Christusbruderschaft (CCB), Selbitz Communität Christusbruderschaft (CCB), Petersberg The Third Order of the CCB/Mr and Mrs Mohr, Selbitz

#### Brazil

## The Evangelical Church of the Lutheran Confession in Brazil

The Ferraz Parish (Ferraz, Formosa, Linha Cinco)

The Santa Cruz Do Sul Parish

The Santa Maria Parish (including ministries at the Ecumenical Center, the University and the University Hospital)

#### USA

## The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

Phinney Ridge Lutheran Church, Seattle
The Compass Center, Seattle
The Compass Cascade Women's Center, Seattle

#### India

The Gurukul Lutheran Theological College, Chennai

The Saccidananda Ashram, Shantivanam, Kulithalai

#### The Tamil Evangelical Lutheran Church

The Nathamangudi Congregation

The Kollumedu Congregation

The Girls' Hostel, Sengaraiyur

#### The Arcot Lutheran Church

The Broadway Parish

#### The Gossner Evangelical Lutheran Church in Chotanagpur and Assam

The Ranchi Parish

The Govindpur Congregation

The Pracharak Training School, Govindpur

The Gossner Theological College, Ranchi

#### Tanzania

#### The Evangelical Lutheran Church in Tanzania

Women against AIDS in Kilimanjaro, Moshi

The Center of Hope, Moshi

The Sinai Congregation, Kia

The Bethel Congregation, Kia

The Shiri Parish, Moshi

The Mwika Bible School, Moshi

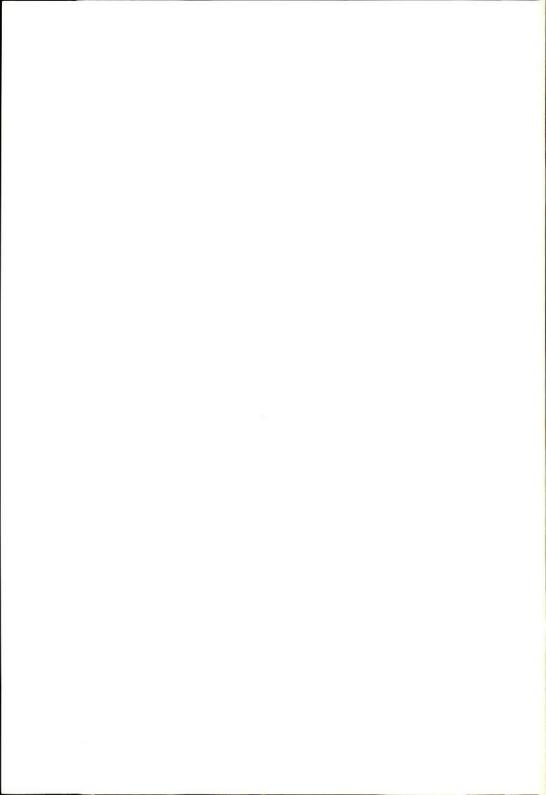
The Lekura Parish, Moshi

I am most grateful to the nine members of the study team for their contributions and commitment to the study: Adiss Arnold (India), Everton Bootz (Brazil), Susan Briehl (USA), Anna Makyao (Tanzania), Christopher Meakin (Sweden), Colette Ranarivony (Madagascar), Sr Susanne Schmitt (Germany), Richard Stetson (Canada) and Patrick Werrn (France).

The fruits of this study include three essays based on the visits: "Community in Christ," "Praying the Word" and "Gathered for Worship". Creating these book-

lets has been a corporate process, involving several people. The primary essays were written by Susan Briehl and Sr Susanne Schmitt (Community in Christ), Christopher Meakin (Praying the Word) and Richard Stetson and Adiss Arnold (Gathered for Worship). Susan Briehl, Sr Susanne Schmitt and Päivi Jussila edited the booklets. We offer these essays for the strengthening and nourishing of Christian community among Lutherans and ecumenically.

All Saints' Day 2002



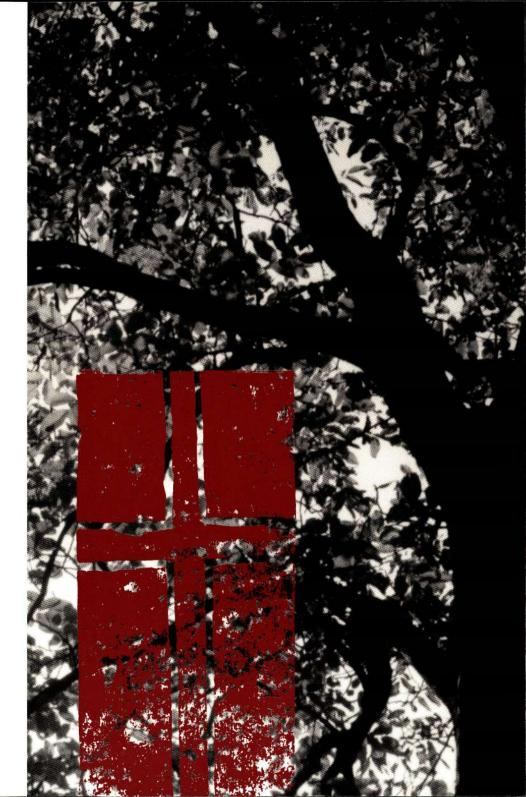


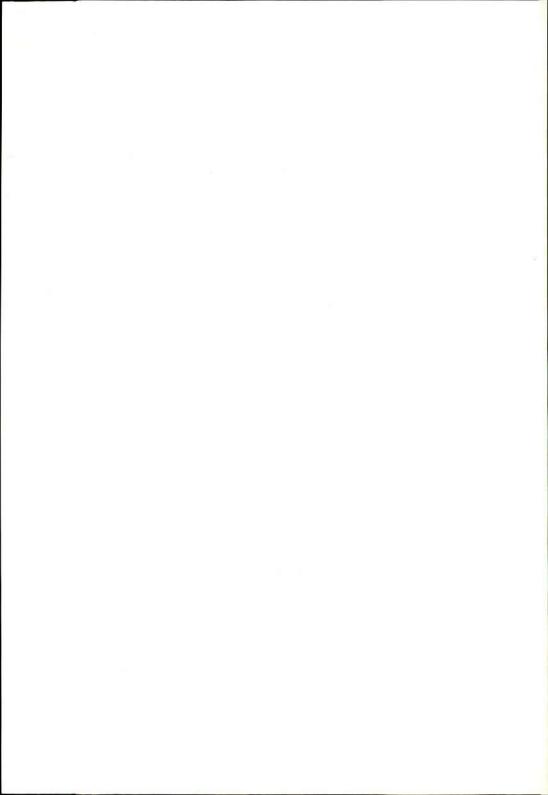
# Praying the Word

The pastor of a Lutheran parish in Brazil started the meeting by distributing nuts to the members of the group. He asked them to try to crack them with their bare hands. With some giggling, attempts were made at such a feat, doomed in advance to failure. After some minutes the pastor then asked the group to work out ways of cracking the nuts with whatever resources were available to them where they were sitting. After some hesitancy various members of the group, individually or together, actually managed to break open the hard shells and were rewarded with the tasty kernels. A few of them put the nuts under the legs of the chairs they had been sitting on, and by either sitting down suddenly and heavily, or by bouncing up and down on the chair without putting their full weight onto it, they split the nuts. Some of the ones that sat down heavily smashed them so completely that the kernels were crushed and could not be separated from the small pieces of shell. They could not be eaten. Others tried cracking their nuts by hitting them against each other. And some threw them on the hard floor.

When the whole group had devoted some time with varying degrees of success to this exercise, the pastor asked for their attention again. Bible reading is like nut cracking, he said. To get at the kernel and really understand the Word of God requires at times great effort, a lot of ingenuity and help from other people. The texts of the Bible can sometimes and for various reasons be as difficult to penetrate as the hard shell of a nut. There are risks as well. Sometimes the way we read the Bible is so clumsy or heavy-handed that its meaning for us is destroyed, like the smashed kernel. Or if we try to eat what we have violently forced out of it in this way, we hurt ourselves on the sharp, broken pieces. The pastor finally asked the Bible study group: what is the easiest or best way to crack a nut? A lady answered that it would have been simpler if they had been able to get hold of the proper tool, a nutcracker. Or barring that, it was a bit easier to cooperate with someone else and use each other's nuts. Exactly, said the pastor, and that is my main point: to open the

meaning of the Bible we need to read it together, to help each other with our attempted readings. And we need suitable tools, that is what the church and its pastors, its spiritual guides and scholars have developed through the ages.





## The Bread of Life

Ho, everyone who thirsts, come to the waters; and you that have no money, come, buy and eat! Come, buy wine and milk without money and without price. Why do you spend your money for that which is not bread, and your labor for that which does not satisfy? Listen carefully to me, and eat what is good, and delight yourselves in rich food (Isa 55:1–2).

When we Christians read the Bible in our ordinary lives as individuals and congregations, we are not usually trying to solve theoretical questions. Instead we are looking for nourishment. We sense that it is through close contact with the Word of God that we can find something that will satisfy our deepest longings. In one way or another, we realize the truth that "one does not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of the Lord" (Deut 8:3b). We hope that if we could only get at that kernel, we would find something that will strengthen and nourish us. That kernel is our relationship with God.

Christian life is lived consciously and purposefully in mutual relation with God in Jesus Christ. We ask: How do I involve all the different spheres of my everyday life in my ongoing relationship with Christ. This means that I do not look for the answers on my own, but share the questions with Christ and try to listen to his answers. And since there are others involved in the same relationship, my life is part of a network of relationships where shared experiences of the Lord affect us at many levels, some external, others deeper, some almost mysterious. Together we ask,

- · What does it mean to live a good life as a Christian?
- · Which biblical resources can help us face specific challenges in our society?
- How can the Bible deepen my life of faith and widen my relationships to others?

This booklet deals with the significance and use of the Bible for nourishing the Christian life. In places where a shortage of food is not uncommon, such as in Africa, there is perhaps a greater sensitivity to how nourishing different food-stuffs can be. A Tanzanian pastor reflects with her students at the Mwika Bible School in Moshi on the significance of Scripture by asking: Is this food going to alleviate my immediate hunger, but in the long term not be enough or of the right sort to prevent malnutrition, disease or death? Or is it only going to keep me alive, but not give my body the nutrition it needs to be fully functional and healthy? Or is my diet going to be so balanced and varied that all my physical needs are sufficiently satisfied to ensure real well-being? This pastor reminds all of us that the way we approach the Bible can lead to varying kinds of nourishment, either insufficient or satisfactory.

This writing will draw on resources from the Lutheran heritage and our ecumenical brothers and sisters as well as resources from the Early Church. We will look specifically at the forms these resources have taken in recent times, both in contemporary writings and in the experiences of living communities. Some of these communities have been visited and others have been learned about indirectly. We hope that this booklet will encourage you, when opening the Bible, to trust the words of Jesus when he said, "I am the bread of life. Whoever comes to me will never be hungry" (Jn 6:35a).

Break now the bread of life, dear Lord, to me, as once you broke the loaves beside the sea.

Beyond the sacred page I seek you, Lord; my spirit waits for you, O living Word.

You are the bread of life, O Lord, to me.

Your holy Word the truth that rescues me.

Give me to eat and live with you above;

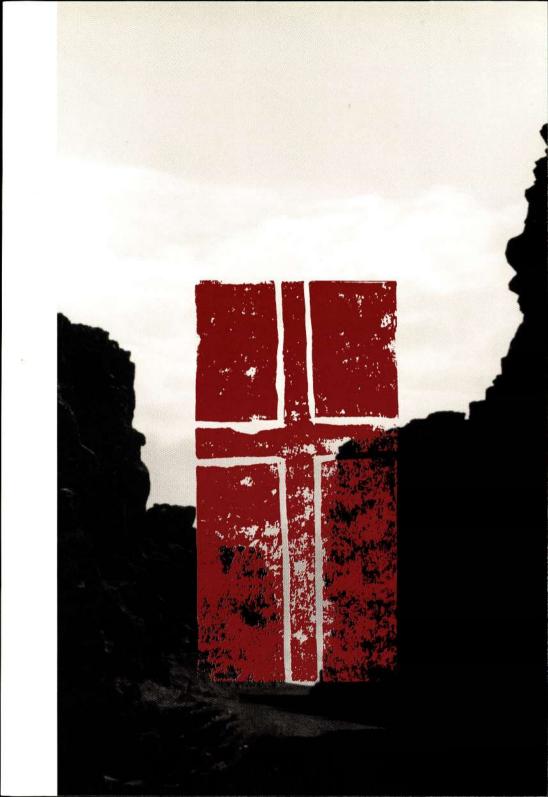
teach me to love your truth, for you are Love.

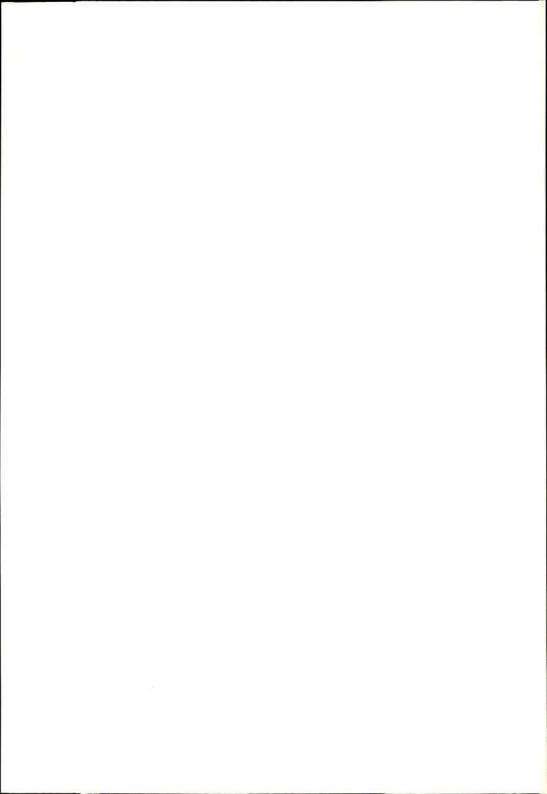
USA

## Impulses for reflection and discussion

- Share a biblical text or story that has nourished you. Tell when and how it did so.
- Martin Luther called John 3:16 "the gospel in a nutshell." What do you think he meant?







# **Encountering God**

I will give them a heart to know that I am the Lord; and they shall be my people and I will be their God, for they shall return to me with their whole heart (Jer 24:7).

Reading Scripture is about personal encounter. Through Scripture God in Christ becomes "visible" to us. In the presence of Christ we are drawn into a fuller relationship with God, one another and the whole creation. In his preface to the Old Testament, Luther calls the Bible the swaddling clothes in which Christ is wrapped, the manger in which he is laid. When we open the Bible to read and pray, we are creeping to the side of the manger to see Jesus. And here in this Word, he promises to meet us.

According to the ancient wisdom of many Christian traditions, Scripture becomes a personal encounter especially when it is prayed. We inherit methods of meditating on and praying with Scripture from our confessional tradition and receive as gifts the methods of other Christian communions. The Bible in itself does not immediately inspire prayer when a person merely opens its covers. Some persons might open this book and only be struck by its literary qualities, some might be irritated by its worldview, others might be perplexed by its inconsistencies. Many persons, including Christians, feel unprepared and inadequate to read the Bible with understanding, much less to meditate upon it.

For Scripture to become the stuff of prayer, we need to be attentive. The sort of awareness of God involved here does not necessarily imply the use of concepts and mental pictures, or direct speech. Just as a relationship is not only expressed in moments of silent intimacy or mutual conversation, so the awareness of God is expressed in many other ways than silent or vocal prayer. However, just as human relationships quickly lose meaning and die if people do not take the time to talk to each other, so our relationship to God withers without prayer.

The church encourages us to open the Scriptures in order to encounter God. This requires an attitude of openness to the other and a willingness to

take the risk of getting to know someone in an encounter in which we cannot predict in advance how things will turn out. When I first meet an unknown person, I have to take the risk of getting to know that person. This is especially risky if I have heard some things about the person that make me feel afraid or unworthy or superior in this person's presence.

As we get to know God, we might find out that God is someone quite different from what we had expected or imagined. The Scriptures are like reports about, pictures of, or messages from that intriguing person we call God ("the masks of God" to adapt a phrase of Luther's). God promises that when we let the features of the biblical picture of God inform our faith and focus our attentiveness, we will not only encounter an ancient human document, but meet the living God. However, we must take the risk of starting, renewing or deepening a relationship. When we take that risk of faith, we will experience the love of God, and begin loving God in return. We will also discover what good things we can hope for from God.

Listen, listen, God is calling through the Word inviting, offering forgiveness, comfort and joy.<sup>2</sup>

Tanzania

## Impulses for reflection and discussion

- When did you last take the risk of getting to know a new person?
- What things have you "heard about God" that make you uneasy about an encounter with God?
- Tell of a time when you experienced an unexpected aspect or "mask" of God.



B = 2

# Reading the Word

When he came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up, he went to the synagogue on the sabbath day, as was his custom. He stood up to read, and the scroll of the prophet Isaiah was given to him. He unrolled the scroll and found the place where it was written: "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to bring good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to let the oppressed go free, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor." Then he began to say to them, "Today this scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing" (Lk 4:16–19, 21).

Every Sunday there are hundreds of villagers, both young and old, with Bibles in their hands, making their way through the banana plantations on the slopes of Mount Kilimanjaro. They are on a journey, going to church. All over the world, Christians daily carry their Bibles with them, showing great reverence for this, their most treasured possession. In India even poor and illiterate Christians consider themselves blessed if they have their own copy of the Bible. In Tanzania, many people believe in the healing power of the book of the Bible itself; those who are sick sleep with their heads resting on the Bible. In the North, many people own several copies of the Bible or treasure an old family Bible, yet rarely, if ever, open them and read from them.

In spite of these different attitudes toward the Bible, we have something in common. In Lutheran congregations all around the world when the faithful gather to worship, the Bible is opened in their midst. The Word of God is read aloud and proclaimed to the whole assembly. In fact, on any given Sunday, increasing numbers of Lutherans, wherever they live and worship, are hearing the same texts read and preached on. The use of a common lectionary or book of readings, not only among Lutherans but within the ecumenical community, reminds us that we are one Body in Christ Jesus.

Reading is one of the most vital practices among Christians. In Christian churches devotional reading has long been a daily discipline. Nevertheless,

there might be times in people's lives when they find it difficult to keep up regular reading. As a man in a parish in Seattle, USA, puts it, "There are seasons of feasting and fasting, times when the Bible is used more and times when it is not used as much." A rhythm of feasting and fasting can be beneficial in the Christian life. The fasting can sometimes make the feasting become an experience of even greater joy.

Many methods have been developed throughout the centuries to support and sustain the reading of the Scriptures. One of these methods is the four-fold pattern of holy reading (*lectio divina*), articulated in the twelfth century by Guigo II, a Carthusian monk. Guigo describes the method in this way:

One day when I was busy working with my hands I began to think about our spiritual work, and all at once four stages in spiritual exercise came into my mind: reading, meditation, prayer and contemplation.... Reading is the careful study of the Scriptures, concentrating all one's powers on it. Meditation is the busy application of the mind to seek with the help of one's own reason for knowledge of hidden truth. Prayer is the heart's devoted turning to God to drive away evil and obtain what is good. Contemplation is when the mind is in some sort lifted up to God and held above itself, so that it tastes the joys of everlasting sweetness.<sup>3</sup>

The reading of scriptural texts is always an interplay between reader and text. It is not only about the biblical texts making a claim on us, but also about us making a claim on them. As a monk, Martin Luther learned ancient methods of meditation. Following the tradition of holy reading, he emphasized the personal meaning of a biblical text. When we read the Scriptures, he urges us to ask how this passage helps me to see that Christ did everything "for my sake" and "for our sake."

In the end, reading is not a process we can control or manipulate. The Holy Spirit speaks to us as the wind which "blows where it chooses, and you hear the sound of it, but you do not know where it comes from or where it goes" (Jn 3:8a). The Holy Spirit leads us to unknown, unexpected or forgotten paths and shows us connections between our lives and the texts.

Come and hear now the gospel, hear the good news.

Come and hear now the gospel, hear the good news.

We sing it many times again, the gospel's good news.

Powerful is the gospel, very powerful.

Powerful is the gospel, very powerful.

We sing it many times again, the gospel's powerful.

Let us live out the gospel, live the good news.

Let us live out the gospel, live the good news.

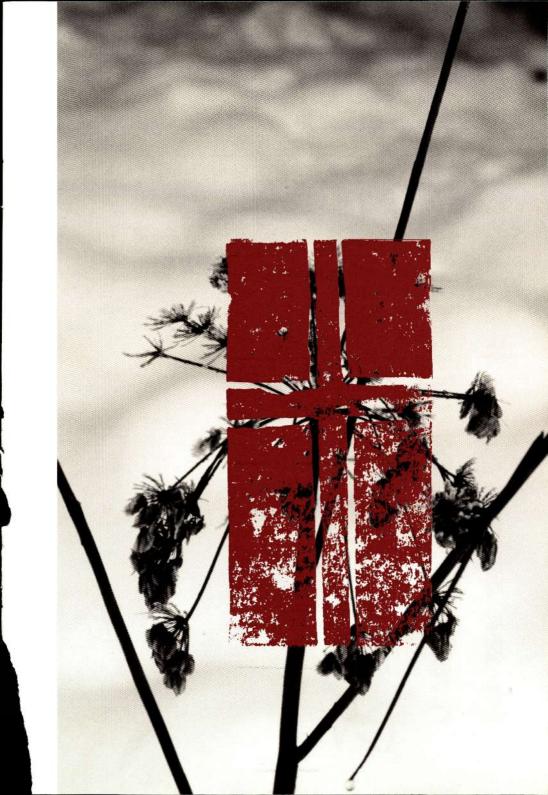
We sing it many times again, go, live the good news.4

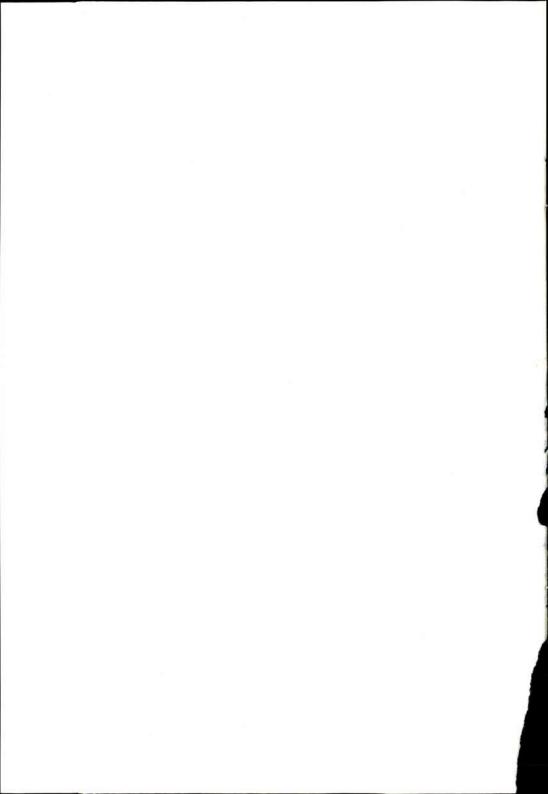
**Zimbabwe** 

#### An exercise for reading the Word

- · Choose a biblical text in your group.
- · Have one person read it aloud, slowly.
- Keep silence for about five minutes, reflecting on images, words and ideas that were evoked.
- · Share your reflections in the group.
- · Ask one another, "How does this text speak a word to you, for your sake?"
- · Close by having another person read the text aloud.

war state in a





# Meditating on the Word

I looked, and a hand was stretched out to me, and a written scroll was in it. God spread it before me; it had writing on the front and on the back, and written on it were words of lamentation and mourning and woe. God said to me, Mortal, eat this scroll that I give you and fill your stomach with it. Then I ate it; and in my mouth it was as sweet as honey (Ezek 2:9–10, 3:3).

In his letter to his barber, Peter, who asked him how to pray, Luther writes,

How many pray the Lord's Prayer several thousand times in the course of a year, and if they were to keep on doing so for a thousand years they would not have tasted nor prayed one iota, one dot, of it! In a word, the Lord's Prayer is the greatest martyr on earth (as are the name and word of God). Everybody tortures and abuses it; few take comfort and joy in its proper use.<sup>5</sup>

According to Luther then, reading and praying the Word require attentiveness and trust. They also involve certain methods. Praying the Word is not just about speaking to God using beautiful or well formulated prayers, such as the Lord's Prayer or one of the psalms; it is about using the whole Bible, including parables, proverbs, stories and letters, in prayer. The classical term for such prayerful use of the Bible is "meditation." This word is understood by many as a technique to achieve inner peace, concentration and some form of introspection. These dimensions are present in Christian meditation, but they are not an end in themselves. They are only a means for the encounter with God in Christ.

Meditation on the Word can be compared to the process of eating. It involves taking food into the mouth, to savor, chew and digest it, to ruminate on it as a cow chews her cud. In other words, meditation is an imaginative process in which the reader chews on biblical words again and again; it is repetitive concentration on words or phrases from the Bible. By this exercise the reader experiences more deeply the personal meaning of a text and makes connec-

tions and free associations between different texts and experiences. The basic idea is that by prayerfully reading a text and meditating on some aspect of it, one is led to more direct prayer and contemplative attention to God.

Let us take Psalm 139:16b–18 as an example and experience one person's meditation upon it. Notice that as she meditates on this psalm, other stories and passages from Scripture enter her mind.

In your book were written all the days that were formed for me, when none of them as yet existed. How weighty to me are your thoughts, O God! How vast is the sum of them! I try to count them—they are more than the sand; I come to the end—I am still with you (Ps 139:16b–18).

I am struck by the image of a book in which all my days are written. I call to mind books which are precious to me, books that have made me know myself a little bit better, or have given me confidence in living. Then I praise God for all God's thoughts, the sum of them being more than the sand. Suddenly, I see Jesus at the temple bending down and writing with his finger in the sand (Jn 8:2–11). I do not know what he is writing. I do not know either what God has written in the book of my days. How and when do my days end? What has God preserved for me? This much I know: "I am still with you." I focus on the word "still" which seems ordinary and unimportant; yet it gives a feeling tone to the whole verse. It brings me hope and peace of mind. I hear Jesus saying to me what he said to the wind and the storm, "Peace! Be still!" (Mk 4:39). And I am calmed, as was the Lake of Galilee.

Martin Luther introduces an interesting adaptation to the four-fold pattern of holy reading. He replaces contemplation with tribulation, temptation or trial. His is a three-fold pattern: prayer, meditation and tribulation. He is critical of any attempt to reach an encounter with God through special mystical experience and knowledge. Instead, he emphasizes that God's wisdom is revealed in the suffering of the cross. It is in the cross of Jesus that one understands who God truly is. Amid the misery of evil and sin, and the sufferings and hardships of ordinary human life, I encounter God as the one that saves me from myself and from others.

Luther applies meditation to the everyday life of ordinary Christians. His desire for meditation to become part of the prayer life of every Christian can be seen in his favored texts for such meditation: the Lord's Prayer, the Creed and the Ten Commandments. These were the basic expressions of faith that he wanted all Christians, whether learned or simple, to know and focus their lives on. He wrote his Small Catechism for use in the home, not only for instruction, but also for prayer and meditation.

Again, in his letter to Peter, Luther shows us how to pray the Word. He describes his method as a wreath, woven of four strands: teaching, thanksgiving, confession of sin and prayer. This simple way to pray can be used with many passages in Scripture. As an example, we will use the second commandment, "You are not to take the name of God in vain."

I **learn** that I should treasure God's name, keeping it pure and holy. I should not swear or lie or put my own name above God's. Instead, I should call upon God's name, praise and honor God.

I thank God for this sacred gift that God has freely given me. I thank God that through this name God has created me, honored me and made me a servant. I also thank God that I can take refuge in this name, as in a mighty fortress.

I confess that I have not called upon God's holy name, but have been ungrateful and untruthful.

I pray for God's help and strength so that I can learn to understand this commandment more fully. I pray that God will protect me from misusing this holy name.

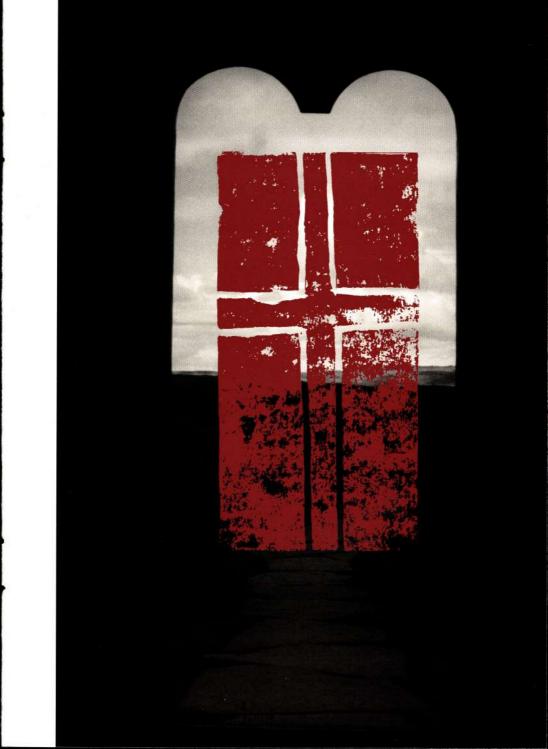
Your word in our lives, eternal, it is a clear fountain flowing; water that gives strength and courage to all who draw near and drink.

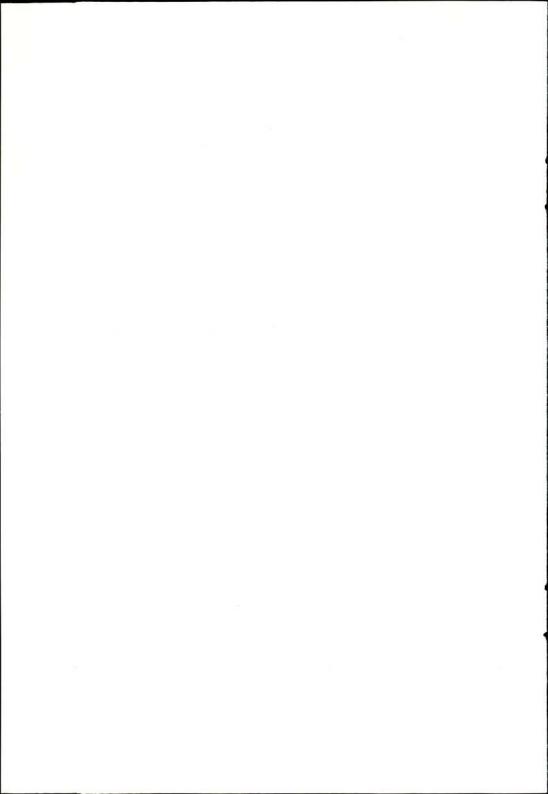
Your word in our lives, eternal, becomes the mirror where we see the true reflection of ourselves: children and image of God.<sup>6</sup>

Brazil

#### An exercise for meditating on the Word

- · Choose another of the Ten Commandments or part of the Lord's Prayer.
- · Read it slowly several times.
- · Begin weaving the four-strand wreath by asking:
  - · What does this teach me?
  - For what do I give thanks?
  - What do I need to confess to God?
- · Close with a prayer.





# Singing the Word

Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly; teach and admonish one another in all wisdom; and with gratitude in your hearts sing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs to God (Col 3:16).

"Those who sing, pray twice!" This saying apparently goes back to the great theologian, Augustine of Hippo (354–430 AD), in the Early Church. Luther believed this deeply and wrote many hymns based on biblical stories and passages, inspired by his own meditation on Scripture. He wrote these texts not in Latin, the language of the privileged and the clergy, but in German, the language of the common people. He wanted the words of the faith to dwell on the lips and in the hearts of the people. He also introduced the singing of the Word by the people into the Sunday worship service.

One of Luther's most beloved hymns *Vom Himmel hoch*, (From heaven above to earth I come) is based on the Christmas story in Luke's Gospel. His text had fifteen verses! The whole story had to be told. He begins with God coming to earth in the birth of Jesus and ends with our praise rising to the throne of God. This hymn sings of the ordinary stuff of life: lowly cattle, a manger bed, hay and straw, the infant's hand. Singing this Christmas hymn and meditating on the birth of Jesus, the Christian prays for union with Christ Jesus, now and always:

O dearest Jesus, holy child, prepare a bed, soft, undefiled, a holy shrine, within my heart, that you and I need never part.<sup>7</sup>

Indeed, Luther stands in a long line of faithful people who have sung praises to God. Miriam the prophet sang at the water's edge after God had led her people safely from bondage to freedom (Ex 15:20–21). David the shepherd-king lamented in the presence of God at the death of his son and praised God for

leading him "through the darkest valley" (Ps 23). Mary, whom the church calls the "Bearer of God" (*Theotokos*), proclaims the greatness of the One who "has filled the hungry with good things" (Lk 1:46–55). And old Simeon, the "Receiver of God" (*Theodokos*) holds the infant Jesus in his arms and sings, "my eyes have seen your salvation" (Lk 2:28–32). We, too, sing these ancient songs, trusting that they evoke the same praise, lament and thanksgiving from us.

In monastic life in a Lutheran community like *Communităt Christusbruderschaft* (CCB) in Selbitz, Germany, prayerful use of the Bible produces its own characteristic style. The sisters and brothers follow the classic form of daily prayer: psalms, short Bible readings, responsorial prayers and biblical canticles. To this they add biblical songs in the style of their own community tradition. For example, they sing a canon written by a community member repeating the words of the angel Gabriel to Mary. In these words they hear anew God's promise made to them: *O selig bist du, die du geglaubt hast!* (Blessed are you who have believed, see Lk 1:45). As with Mary, God calls these lowly servants to prepare a *Liebesraum*, a "loving space," both within themselves and in the world into which Jesus enters.

In villages in Tamil Nadu, India, some congregations gather in the evening to sing biblical songs set to traditional folk melodies. Sometimes they sing throughout the night until the break of dawn. In the tribal areas of northeastern India, dancing, accompanied by chanting, is an important part of traditional culture. These chants have been given Christian content based on biblical texts or images. Guests are brought into the village by a group of young people dancing and singing a welcome, "What luck that Mary called him Jesus!" Then the guests are decked with garlands of many colored flowers and their hands are washed. These Indian expressions are examples of prayer clothed in local culture. They nourish a biblical way of life in a place where either complete or partial illiteracy are not unusual.

On the slopes of Mount Kilimanjaro in Tanzania, children walk between banana trees along the reddish-brown mud roads on a Sunday morning. The older children, some carrying their own Bibles, take care of the smaller children. They are used to walking; the school children among them often walk between two and four miles in both directions to get to school on weekdays. They are now on their way to Sunday school. They laugh and sing. Songs unite them despite their various abilities and ages. One song is a catchy version of the story about how Paul and Silas were praying and singing in prison, when an earthquake opened the doors and unlocked their chains (Acts 16:25–34). The children will probably not forget that biblical scene. Perhaps it will leave in them a lasting feeling for the power of God to free people and the joy of singing prayer together.

In congregations in Tanzania people sometimes feel that there are no suitable hymns to express what is to be heard in the readings for a particular Sunday. So they compose choruses and biblical songs to African melodies and rhythms, giving expression to their reactions in prayer and praise to the Word of God and relating it to concrete situations in their lives at that moment. These songs are seldom written down, but become part of the living memory of the individual community, and at times they are spread to other congregations. In northern Europe and North America, songs of faith are rarely created spontaneously. Instead, books hold and preserve their treasury of hymns and songs. Whatever the method, the wonderful gift of singing is available to all, regardless of where they live or who they are.

Meditating on the Word is not only a movement inwards. A Tanzanian who had thought about the way the Bible is appropriated by his own people said that they experience their faith more as a series of events than an inner process. He put it very appropriately saying, "The German missionaries brought with them their hymns, which speak of us letting our souls sing the praises of God, using phrases like, 'My soul, now praise your maker!' An African would say instead, 'I **sing out** my soul in worship and in my whole life'." First, the Word comes into a person, into a community. Then, the person and the community sing out the Word, sing out their faith, sing out their lives. Luther's desire that people encounter the living voice of the gospel is happening today when Lutherans sing.

Alleluia, praise the Lord.

Alleluia, praise the Lord.

Praises, high praises, now bring to the Lord.

Alleluia, praise the Lord.

Songs of joy, sing to the Lord.

Songs of joy, sing to the Lord.

Dancing and singing your praises to God.

Songs of joy, sing to the Lord.

Beat the drums; sing out for the Lord.

Beat the drums; sing out for the Lord.

Praises, high praises, give thanks to the Lord.

Beat the drums; sing out for the Lord.8

Nigeria

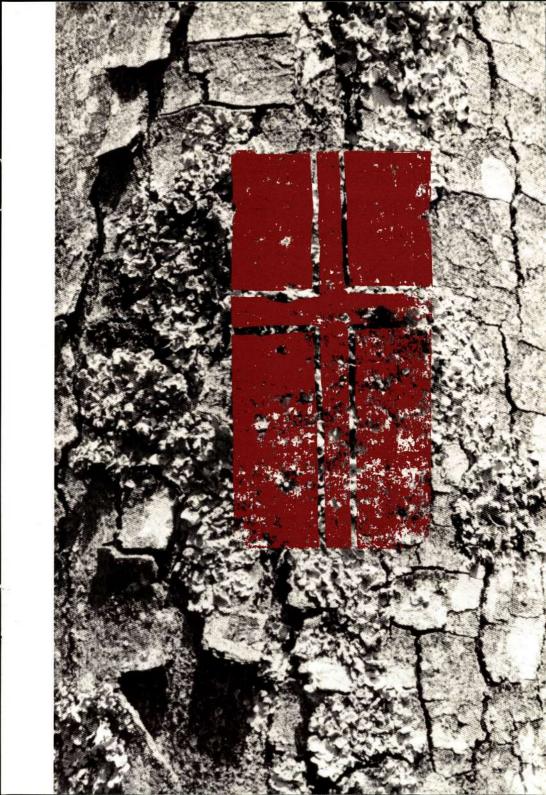
#### Exercises for singing the Word

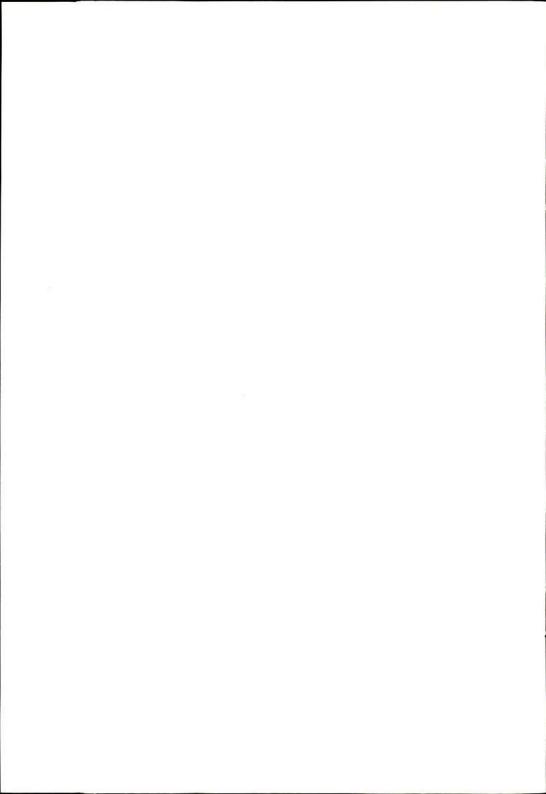
The above song from Nigeria echoes Psalm 150.

- · Find a song of praise from your own tradition.
- · Try singing it, adding rhythmic sound and movement.

Read Psalm 23 aloud slowly.

- If you already know a song based on this psalm, sing it together.
- · Or, create your own song based on this text.
- What do you think Augustine meant when he said, "Those who sing, pray twice"?





## Imagining the Word

O taste and see that the Lord is good; happy are those who take refuge in him (Ps 34:8).

Luther, who was educated in the tradition of the Augustinian monks, was familiar with and himself practiced different spiritual exercises. Some of these exercises engage the imagination and fill the mind and heart with images present in and inspired by Scripture. For Luther mental pictures and images were essential for reading Scripture. He wrote, "Children must have horses and I must have images.... One cannot understand spiritual things if one does not understand them in images."

Such exercises engage all the senses. Imagine yourself inside a biblical story, smelling, tasting, touching, hearing everything that surrounds you. The more you allow yourself to do this, the more vivid the story becomes, for as Luther tells us, the Bible is like an herb, the more you rub it, the stronger its odor. Remain inside the story until the image of Jesus comes into being. Look at him, listen to him and talk with him. Eventually, the biblical text will slip from your mind into your heart. What follows are the images that came to one person as he read the story of the woman caught in adultery (Jn 8:1–11).

I see the temple in the early morning light; the imposing buildings glow. Walking up to the pillars, I touch their smooth cool stone. The acrid smell of yesterday's burnt offerings still hangs in the air. Gradually people begin to stir; the priests start arriving. More and more people come to pray and make their offerings. I take my place among them. I, too, feel a need to offer something to God, to ask God to notice my wretched condition. A secret burns within me.

Suddenly expectancy fills the air, an excitement. Jesus approaches. Immediately people start gathering around him, attracted as if by a magnet. I too am attracted, and try to push my way through the crowd. The pungent smell of unwashed bodies, sweat and spices fills the air. I manage to get to the front and see

Jesus in front of me. There is something special about this man, but before I can really appreciate the effect he is having on me or understand what he is saying, there is a commotion. An agitated group bursts through the crowd and the atmosphere changes: something threatening is in the air. I recognize some scribes and Pharisees in the group. Some men are dragging a young woman behind them; they are very rough with her. She is wearing fine clothes on, but they have been torn; her face is bruised and beaten.

Behind her tears her eyes are wild with fear and I ache for her. The Pharisees accuse her of adultery. I hear the mocking question put to Jesus: "Now what do you say?" We all wait tensely for Jesus' answer. Silence. He bows down and writes with his finger in the grime on the floor of the temple. The scribes repeat their question with growing irritation. In contrast to the heated tones of his opponents, Jesus calmly says, "Let anyone among you who is without sin be the first to throw a stone at her" (Jn 8:7). He continues to write. I strain to see what he is scribbling on the ground, but cannot quite make it out. There is an embarrassed catching of breaths. After several minutes, the oldest Pharisee, with his imposing white beard and stern expression, turns abruptly and leaves, pushing people aside as he goes. The others follow him, one by one.

Jesus raises his head and asks the woman who still lies shaking and shivering on the ground: "Woman, where are they? Has no one condemned you?" She half whispers, "No one, sir." I hear Jesus say some words, but then something strange happens. Jesus is talking directly to me: "Neither do I condemn you. Go your way, and from now on do not sin again" (Jn 8:10-11).

The Bible can be read in such a way that its meaning becomes an integrated part of a person's experience. The Word sinks into the heart. This form of meditation, developed by Ignatius of Loyola, is an example of a method that allows the use of the imagination—seeing concrete places, situations and people of the Bible. This method brings everything we have and are to Scripture. Many experience this as liberating, for not only the mind, but also the emotions are engaged.

Focusing on Christ when praying the Word and using images to identify with the texts, are central to Luther's principles for interpreting Scripture. Ac-

cording to Luther that which points to Christ is the key to discovering how different parts of the Bible should be understood and related to each other. When reading Scripture, we should ask how this passage helps me see that Christ did everything for my sake. Luther reminds us that the offer of salvation witnessed to in the Bible is addressed directly to each one of us. We must let it grip our minds and hearts. This is exactly what a method of meditation that gives room to imagination and emotions aims at.

Earlier in this chapter we meditated on the story of the woman caught in adultery in John 8:1–11. We pictured it in our minds and felt it in our hearts. Because this is a personal encounter, the story is told in the first person. This meditation helps us to identify both with the woman in her sin and with Jesus in his forgiveness. The story lives in us through imagining it in this way, and the truth of the gospel is brought home to us.

Were you there when they crucified my Lord?
Were you there when they crucified my Lord?
Oh, sometimes it causes me to tremble, tremble, tremble.
Were you there when they crucified my Lord?

Were you there when they nailed him to the tree?

Were you there when they nailed him to the tree?

Oh, sometimes it causes me to tremble, tremble, tremble.

Were you there when they nailed him to the tree?<sup>10</sup>

African-American Spiritual

### An exercise for imagining the Word

Luther writes: "When I hear of Christ, an image of a man who hangs on a cross takes form in my heart, just as the reflection of my face naturally appears in the water when I look into it."

- · Light a candle.
- · Sit silently.
- · Breathe slowly, deeply.
- One person prays this simple prayer: "On my heart imprint your image, blessed Jesus. Amen."
- Another person reads the story of the crucifixion of Jesus—Matthew 27: 33–36—leaving brief spaces of silence after each phrase.
- In silence, let the image of the crucified Christ come into focus in your mind and heart.
- Sit with this image for several minutes.
- The person, who opened with prayer, now closes, praying: "On my heart imprint your image, blessed Jesus. Amen."





## **Enacting the Word**

So if I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet. For I have set you an example, that you also should do as I have done to you (Jn 13:14-15).

When a young Christian man in Ranchi, India, welcomes travelers into his home by kneeling before them and washing their feet with soap and warm water, then drying them with a towel, he is practicing an ancient custom of hospitality. But, as Jesus once did to his disciples, he is also honoring his guests by stooping to serve them (Jn 13:1–20). He is also enacting the good news that in Christ we are set free to serve one another as equals and friends. People in the Christian villages of Tamil Nadu, India, are used to enacting the biblical stories. They are using a familiar cultural customs such as washing feet to bring biblical texts to life. Even those who cannot read memorize Scripture in this way.

During summer vacation Bible school, the children of the Lutheran parishes in Seattle go on outings to places that are similar to those mentioned in the Bible. There the children together with adults enact the stories of Jesus' life. John the Baptist comes alive at a river, where the children witness the baptism of Jesus. At a carpenter's shop they meet the child Jesus working with Joseph. They sit in a neighborhood synagogue, watching as Jesus opens the scroll to read from the prophet Isaiah. Imagine the excitement of hearing Jesus call the fishermen to be disciples, played out on the shore of a lake with real fishing boats. Or, sitting on one of this city's many hills and hearing Jesus speaking, "Blessed are you...." With resourcefulness and fantasy such "godly play" can be used anywhere. The important thing is not that all the details are absolutely genuine. The aim is not to recreate first-century Palestine, but to enter and experience Scripture.

Jesus himself was a great storyteller, using parables to draw his listeners into God's Word for them. He used the stuff of ordinary life in his stories: seeds, birds, weeds, coins, sheep, fishing nets and fig trees. The children and their

Sunday school teachers in Brazil know this method. At an inter-congregational event in Dona Josefa the children study together the fascinating details of Jesus' parable of the sower (Mt 13:1–23). They plant seeds in many different places: on the path, on rocky ground, among thorns and in rich, dark soil. They reflect together on the nature of different soils. This way they enter into the parable and together with Jesus' listeners start to ask questions, such as "I wonder what kind of soil I am," "I wonder what kind of seed this is and what will grow from it?", "Am I patient enough to wait for the seed to grow?" In the end, the storytelling is not about finding answers to our questions; the questions are important in themselves because they bring us close to Jesus.

Many Lutheran women in India learn to pray with their whole bodies. Little girls, as young as four years old, begin learning the movements and gestures of traditional storytelling dance. Eventually, with their hands and feet they will be able to express as many as twenty-four different emotions. They will learn to tell the stories of Scripture in their dance. One day these little girls will join the other women in their faith community in dancing the story of Christ's passion, his suffering, crucifixion and death on Good Friday.

Not only in India, but also around the world, Lutherans gather during Holy Week to listen to the story of Christ's passion. Even if many have heard the story so many times that they know it by heart, it still remains a fresh and powerful experience. We should never underestimate the power of the spoken word. In Sweden and other countries, well-known actors are inspired to retell one or the other of the gospels in the form of monologues without the use of anything other than their voices. They have fascinated audiences of both adults and youngsters. Some know the story well and some hear it for the first time.

I love to tell the story of unseen things above, of Jesus and his glory, of Jesus and his love.

I love to tell the story, because I know it's true; it satisfies my longings as nothing else would do.

I love to tell the story; I'll sing this theme in glory and tell the old, old story of Jesus and his love. I love to tell the story: how pleasant to repeat what seems, each time I tell it, more wonderfully sweet!

I love to tell the story, for some have never heard the message of salvation from God's own holy Word.

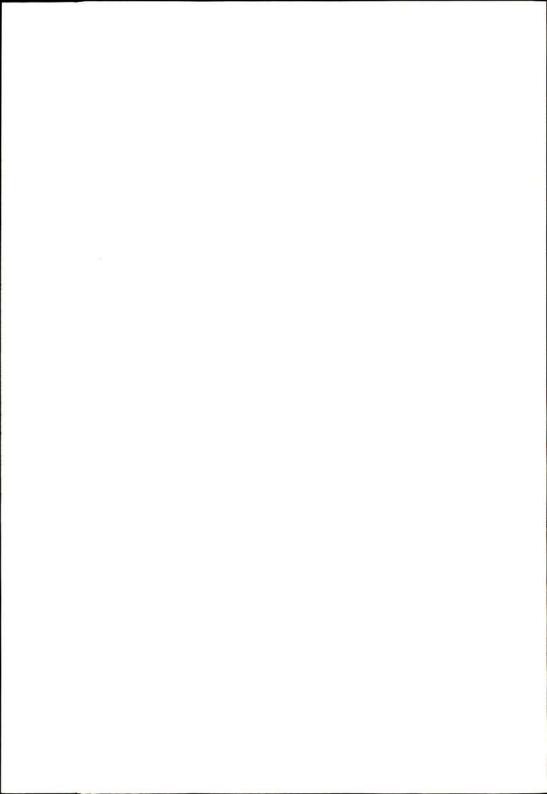
I love to tell the story, for those who know it best seem hungering and thirsting to hear it like the rest.

And when, in scenes of glory, I sing the new, new song, I'll sing the old, old story that I have loved so long.

USA

#### An exercise for enacting the Word

- · Read Luke 10:25-37, the parable of the Good Samaritan, slowly.
- What roles are in the text? Have each person choose his or her role.
- Act it out as freely as possible, using no words.





B mark or , se em me

=

# Life Opens the Word

The Israelites groaned under their slavery, and cried out. Out of the slavery their cry for help rose up to God. "God heard their groaning, and God remembered his covenant with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. God looked upon the Israelites, and God took notice of them (Ex 2:23b–25).

The Bible is meant to be read in the midst of everyday life. We read it in light of our various situations, bringing our questions and longings. There are no predetermined answers. Yet we can trust that the questions we bring, will be met by Christ. The Bible also reads us. The claims of Scripture judge our lives and call us to repent and turn in a new direction (*metanoia*). The gospel then renews and transforms us.

In many places in the USA, small groups of people meet in order to reflect on their experiences, longings and problems in light of the texts of Scripture. They are following an ancient way of being drawn into Scripture and formed by the Christian faith. For many of them this journey will take them to the waters of baptism. This process is sometimes called the adult catechumenate. As a member of one of these groups said, "the catechumenate is about formation in faith, not information about the faith." Those seeking faith and those desiring to renew or to deepen their relationship with God meet with active lay members of the congregation. Together they dare to share what has happened to them thus far on their way with Christ. They also discover how the Scriptures come alive in their lives.

For example, they read the story of Christ healing ten lepers, only one of whom came back to thank Jesus (Lk 17:11–19). This story spoke with extraordinary power when shared in one group. The already active member of the congregation told of how his father was dying of cancer. There seemed to be no hope, but after having been estranged for many years, their relationship had been healed. Then two of the seekers, who were a couple, revealed that the wife had been seriously ill. They had prayed and she had unexpectedly

recovered. Christ's forgiveness and healing presence was felt in the group, but no neat theological answers about faith and healing, let alone about God's love and suffering, were expected or needed.

In Lutheran congregations around Mount Kilimanjaro, Bible study has in recent years found a new form. It was difficult to get people to come to the traditional Wednesday evening meetings in the church to study the Scriptures. So instead, parishioners began meeting in each other's homes on a rotating basis. In Moshi town parish, one evening dozens of people from the neighborhood met in the garden of one family. The meeting, led by an elder, included an intense and free discussion of a text. Many gave their own interpretations, relating the text to their everyday lives or the experiences of people they knew. The meeting ended in shared prayer. Since they knew one another, the prayers inspired by reading the Word were very personal and relevant.

In El Salvador, members of Lutheran communities reflect together on their social, political and economic situation in the light of biblical texts. They are drawn especially to the stories of the liberation of the people of ancient Israel. Like those of the Hebrew slaves, their lives are often marked by injustice, poverty and violence. When they read these texts they encounter the God who liberates and gives hope to them and to all who are oppressed. As many others, both today and yesterday, they can pray "since you did this for the people of Israel, do it for us."

In a similar way, the caste-less people of India, the Dalits, find hope for their own liberation in Scripture. They identify with Jesus whose ancestors include gentile women such as Tamar, Rahab and Ruth (Mt 1:2–6), who did not fit into the accepted roles of society. Like the Dalits, Jesus was born in poverty outside normal living conditions, and grew up in an insignificant village. He suffered humiliation and rejection. "Because he himself was tested by what he suffered, he is able to help those who are being tested" (Heb 2:18). Jesus now stands with them at the margins of social respectability and power. His Word assures them that God is the God of the oppressed, their God.

Dietrich Bonhoeffer, who played an important role in the opposition of the churches to Nazism, died for his faith. He believed that the heart of God opens itself to us in the Word. He meditated on the psalms in the context of cruelty

and suffering. He invites us to pray the psalms with Christ, whose prayers they after all were. On *Kristallnacht* (the Night of Broken Glass), November 9, 1938—the night the Nazis looted the shops of the Jews and burned their synagogues—he prayed Psalm 74 with Christ, who, Bonhoeffer believed, was being persecuted with his people, the Jews: "They said to themselves, 'We will utterly subdue them'; they burned all the meeting places of God in the land" (Ps 74:8).

From the Early Church until today, those who are oppressed have been comforted by Jesus' death and resurrection. In their tribulations they have met the crucified and risen Christ of the Bible. They have found that Christ walks with them on their way. Meditative prayer takes seriously our personal and collective brokenness and experiences of abandonment. The agonies of many parts of God's creation are places where the reality of prayer is tested.

Parishes of the Evangelical Church of the Lutheran Confession in Brazil work to counteract the poverty and social deprivation of the *favellas* (slums). For instance, at a service in a church in Nuovo Hamburgo, six children of different ages were baptized. The pastor told the story of their family, for they were all brothers and sisters. Poverty had led the father to drug abuse and alcoholism. In a sick rage he had killed the mother and tried to do the same to the children. They had however escaped. Now they and two older siblings were being adopted by two families of the parish, four children each. The baptism of these children was felt to be a demonstration against the powers of death. The words of Paul came alive. "Therefore we have been buried with him by baptism into death, so that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, so we too might walk in newness of life" (Rom 6:4). Even if the children struggle with their past for the rest of their lives, Christ's new life is breaking in.

At the Center of Hope in Moshi, Tanzania, the women of the church give advice and concrete help to people affected in different ways by HIV/AIDS: those who are infected; those who have developed AIDS; their dependents. In the Kilimanjaro area, they work to counteract prejudice and ignorance. They equip the local congregations to accept and help people infected by HIV/AIDS and arrange care for such orphans as *God wishes*, a little boy whose

mother has died of the disease, whose father has disappeared and who has been confirmed as HIV-positive. Hopefully the church will be able to show him that God wishes him *to be*. Through practical care and the words of the Bible which are read at the center, he may meet the love of God. When our lives open the Bible, the Bible calls us to live fully in the world.

The word is not created us to draw and set apart.

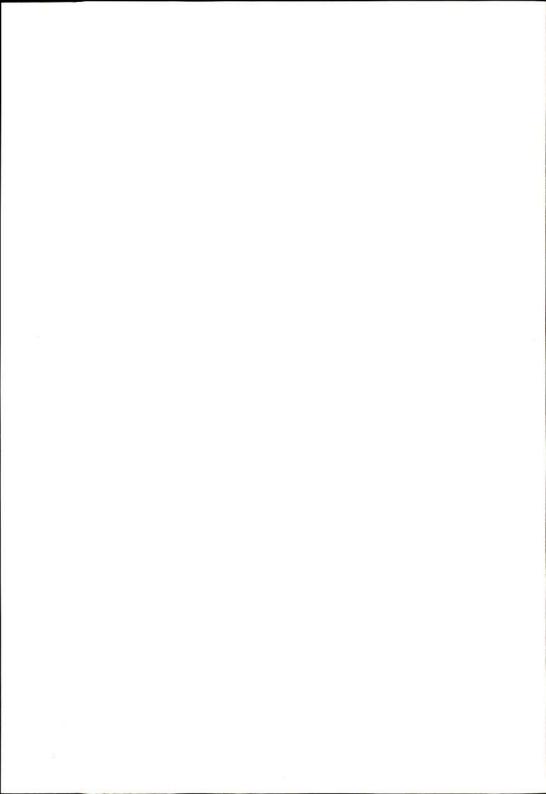
The word is like a bridge to carry love both forth and back, carry love both forth and back.<sup>13</sup>

Brazil

#### An exercise for living out the Word

- Think of a biblical story or passage that relates directly to your life or the life of your faith community. Describe this.
- What other communities or peoples might identify with the story of the Exodus? Why?





### The Inner Bible

The word is near you, on your lips and in your heart (Rom 10:8).

In many Christian traditions contemplation is seen as a deepening of prayer. The fulfillment of prayer is a state of quiet and union with God. The nothingness encountered in deep meditation reveals the same God as is encountered in meditating on the Word. Loving attentiveness to that person is the reality of any Christian prayer and meditation. In contemplation the encounter with the God of the Bible happens at a level of our being that is difficult to describe in the terms of ordinary experiences of mind and body. In those moments, the reality of praying the Word becomes completely interior. Perhaps we could talk of meeting God in "the inner Bible." Nonetheless, the outer Bible always remains the focus of our attention, so that we recognize whom we are meeting in prayer.

The "outer Bible" always reminds us of the external conditions. An Indian pastor tells the story of trying to teach farmers of his congregation how to meditate on the Word. He was unsuccessful. He realized why this did not work when he heard the growling of their stomachs. How could they keep silent, contemplating the words of the "inner Bible" when they were hungry. How could they find time to sit and pray when they needed to work constantly to meet even the basic needs of their families. The pastor concluded by saying, "An empty stomach has no ears." The "outer Bible" will not let us forget such truths.

A method of contemplative prayer that for many Lutherans has grown in significance is the Jesus Prayer originating in the Orthodox tradition. The Jesus Prayer focuses the heart on one phrase inspired by Scripture, "Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy upon me, a sinner." Such was the cry of blind Bartimaeus in Mark 10:46–52. These words are repeatedly prayed aloud or formed silently by the lips while breathing in and out. Breathing is a way to communicate with God: I breathe out towards God and God gives me breath.

The prayer gradually becomes more inward and acquires a rhythm of its own. The aim is that it enters into the heart and becomes unceasing and effortless.

Calling on the name of Jesus in prayer is biblical. The second commandment reminds us that God's name is a precious gift and that we are to call upon it. In the New Testament, there are many texts which express our respect for the name of Jesus. At the Last Supper, our Lord himself declared, "I tell you, if you ask anything of the Father in my name, he will give it to you" (Jn 16:23b). So, in the Jesus Prayer we ask for mercy in Jesus' name.

This prayer invites us to become more aware of Christ's presence. Bartimaeus' eyes were opened and he could see. He could see in particular the one who had healed him, whose presence he previously could only suspect. The continuous practice of the Jesus Prayer makes one so attentive to Christ that this prayer is constantly in one's heart.

A continuous prayer and the prayer of a heart are closely related to the prayer of the Holy Spirit. They are all inner prayers, taking over the whole person. Exodus 14 can help us to understand the prayer of the Holy Spirit. When Moses stood at the Red Sea, the roaring sea in front of him and the Pharaoh and his troops behind him, he was not able to utter even a simple prayer. But God spoke to the terrified Moses and asked him: "Why do you cry out to me?" (Ex 14:15a) Moses had been afflicted and silent, but God had heard his wordless prayer as if it were a loud cry. Paul helps us to understand this passage by describing how the Holy Spirit intercedes for saints "with sighs too deep for words" (Rom 8:26). According to Luther, the Holy Spirit had almost become like another reality in Moses who had not perceived by his senses the sigh of the Spirit.

The Christian ashram close to Tiruchi, India, is a meeting place of East and West. The temple looks like a Hindu temple. Those who come to pray sit in the outer court, a square building with open sides. A small dark room at one end is the inner sanctuary, symbolizing the transcendent God whom we cannot see. Above this, on the outside of the structure, is a dome, surrounded by typically Indian figures representing Christ, the God whom we can see, and his apostles who have made him known to us. Classic Hindu techniques are used in meditation and worship: *mantras* (repetitive chanting), Sanskrit words

for the different aspects of the divine, and sandalwood paste, powder spots between the eyebrows, incense and fire. The Christian context and readings from the Bible permeate these symbols. As Father Tomas says, "If a Hindu recognizes this place as holy, we have been obedient to the Holy Spirit."

Ashrams provide a place for people to pray—a place of retreat and renewal. Traditionally, they have been founded and lead by a spiritual leader, a guru. In Christian ashrams, the true guru is Christ himself, even if a gifted spiritual guide leads the community. People come to withdraw from the ordinary world and to deepen their Christian faith. In recent years many retreat centers have been founded by Lutheran churches. Holden Village, high in the Cascades Mountains of Washington State, USA, is one example. Here an abandoned mining town has become a center of renewal. The geographical isolation encourages an intense experience of biblically orientated community, daily worship and prayer, freed from the distractions of modern technology. On Friday evenings the community gathers in a darkened room around a large cross lying on the floor. Their prayer is woven of silence, Scripture and simple songs sung repeatedly. People come to the cross, bringing their burdens, sorrows and wounds. Kneeling and praying there, they light candles. Others lay hands upon them, anointing them with oil, and speaking Christ's mercy. At the close of prayer, the cross rests in a sea of light, a fiery reminder that into the nighttime of our fears, the crucified and risen one comes to dwell.

Here and everywhere that people gather to read and pray, contemplate and sing the Word, Christ comes. He comes as one among us, into human time and place. He comes as God's own Word, speaking life and mercy. He comes crucified, entering our suffering and our sorrows. He comes risen, bringing hope and healing to the world. He comes holy and eternal, opening to us the very heart of God. "O taste and see that the Lord is good" (Ps 34:8).

Word of justice, Alleluia, come to dwell here. Maranatha!
Word of mercy, Alleluia, live among us. Maranatha!
Word of power, Alleluia, live within us. Maranatha!
Word of freedom, Alleluia, save your people. Maranatha!
Word of healing, Alleluia, heal our sorrow. Maranatha!

Word of comfort, Alleluia, bring us hope now. Maranatha! Word of gladness, Alleluia, fill our hearts now. Maranatha! Word of wisdom, Alleluia, come renew us. Maranatha!<sup>14</sup>

England

#### An exercise for praying the Jesus Prayer

- · Read the prayer aloud slowly and quietly. Let it flow in a gentle way.
- · Concentrate on the meaning of the words.
- · At the end of each prayer, pause briefly before beginning again.
- · Repeat the prayer fifty or a hundred times.
- At another time, read the Jesus Prayer by forming the words silently with your lips in the midst of your daily life: in the garden or kitchen, at a bus stop or in a shop, at a moment of distress or joy.

### **Notes**

- <sup>1</sup> Mary A. Lathbury, 1841–1913, alt., in *Lutheran Book of Worship* (Augsburg Publishing House: Minneapolis, 1978), nr. 235:1,3.
- <sup>2</sup> Tanzanian traditional hymn, tr. Howard S. Olson, in *With One Voice* (Augsburg Fortress: Minneapolis, 1995) nr. 712, refrain.
- <sup>3</sup> Guigo II, *The Ladder of Monks and Twelve Meditations*, tr. and with an introduction by Edmund Colledge and James Walsh (Garden City: Doubleday Image, 1978; reprinted in Kalamazoo: Cistercian Publications, 1981), pp. 67–68.
- <sup>4</sup> Traditional Shona hymn, tr. Francis Brienan and Maggie Hamilton, in *Agape—Songs of Hope and Reconciliation* (The Oxford University Press: Oxford, 2003), nr. 76.
- <sup>5</sup> Martin Luther, "A Simple Way to Pray" (1535), tr. Carl J. Schindler, in *Luther's Works: Devotional Writings II* (Fortress Press: Philadelphia, 1968), p. 200.
- 6 Simei Monteiro, tr. Sonya Ingwersen, in op. cit. (note 4), nr. 97.
- 7 Luther, op. cit. (note 1), nr. 51:12.
- 8 Traditional Yoruba hymn, tr. Emmanuel Badejo, in op. cit. (note 4), nr. 5.
- 9 Martin Luther, WA 46,308, author's own translation.
- 10 Op. cit. (note 1), nr. 92:1-2.
- Martin Luther, "Against the Heavenly Prophets in the Matter of Images and Sacraments" (1525), *Luther's Works*, ed. Conrad Bergendoff (Muhlenberg Press: Philadelphia, 1958), vol. 40, pp. 99–100.
- 12 Katherine Hankey, 1834-1911, in op. cit. (note 1), nr. 390.
- <sup>13</sup> Irene Gomes, tr. Jeffrey T. Myers, in *Thuma Mina* (Basileia Verlag: Basel; Strube Verlag: Munich—Berlin, 1995), nr. 83, refrain.
- 14 Bernadette Farrell, in op. cit. (note 4), nr. 107.

